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Histories of the Aftermath: The Legacies of the Second World War in Europe.

Edited by Frank Biess and Robert G. Moeller. New York: Berghahn Books. 2010. Pp. vii + 321. Cloth \$95.00. ISBN 978-1-84545-732-7.

As Frank Biess points out in his introduction to this edited volume, “[t]he history of the European ‘postwar’ is *en vogue*” (p. 1). Studies that examine World War II’s aftereffects on post-1945 Europe have multiplied rapidly in recent years, and the collection of essays under review here makes a very valuable contribution to this thriving field.

The introduction lays out the book’s objectives clearly. As Biess explains, the volume seeks to “disrupt the notion of 1945 as a complete hiatus” and to highlight continuing “traces of the Second World War within postwar societies” (p. 3). The intention is to emphasize social and cultural history, with three broad goals in mind. Most fundamentally, the authors want to draw attention to the presence of the wartime past and its legacies in post-1945 European societies. By doing so, they intend to “restore the plurality and multiplicity of European histories,” stressing specific national linkages between the past and the present rather than Cold-War exigencies and other external factors specific to the post-1945 period (p. 3). Finally, and most ambitiously, they also hope to point the way toward a “transnational and comparative history” of the war’s aftermath that would challenge and ultimately transcend conventional national historiographies (p. 4).

The book is divided into five thematic sections. The first addresses methodological questions, outlining several possible approaches to the study of the European postwar, the most notable and original of which is Biess’s plea for the history of emotions as an analytical framework that has the potential to cast significant new light on this period. The second focuses on an issue that has dominated much of the existing scholarship on the relationship between World War II and the post-1945 period: the history of memory, with a particular emphasis on the tension between public and private memories of the conflict that has emerged as a prominent theme in recent relevant literature. The third section moves on to examine a particular site of memory that has played a prominent role in the public commemoration of the war: its cinematic representations. The fourth widens the scope to explore the reconstruction of communities, citizenship, and civil society in postwar Europe, while the fifth and final group of essays examines the reshaping of military cultures and regimes in the aftermath of the most destructive conflict in human history.

In many ways, *Histories of the Aftermath* is a highly successful volume. Its sixteen chapters cohere very well, not only because of the book’s clear and tightly thematic organization but also because most of the contributions focus primarily on either Germany or the Soviet Union. Every essay included here is an

interesting, insightful contribution, and several chapters stand out as particularly original and illuminating. Frank Biess's methodological chapter on the potential of the history of emotions, already mentioned above, is one such contribution. Another is Paul Betts's comparative reading of East and West German etiquette books as windows on competing attempts to rebuild civil society in Cold-War Germany. Lisa Kirschenbaum offers a fascinating analysis of the commemoration of the siege of Leningrad in the Soviet Union, in which she stresses the mutually reinforcing interaction of public and private memories, thereby challenging oft-repeated claims about the inherent conflict between deliberately distorted official memories and authentic private memories. Katherine Lebow, in turn, analyzes postwar reconstruction efforts in Poland, identifying the war and its immense destructiveness as a catalyst that helped to pave the way for the emergence of new definitions of moral economy and citizenship under post-1945 socialist rule. The list of outstanding contributions could go on, but space does not allow an exhaustive discussion here.

A single volume obviously cannot do full justice to such a vast topic as the legacies of World War II in Europe, and *Histories of the Aftermath* is deliberately selective in its coverage. It does not address the experiences of countries that remained neutral during the war, for example, and its primary geographical emphasis on Germany and the Soviet Union—although useful in maintaining a tight analytical focus—means that other regions receive little or no attention. The different contributions also vary in just how transnational and comparative they are; while some chapters make a very serious attempt to provide broader comparative insights, others remain focused on particular national contexts. All in all, however, this is an ambitious, clearly conceived and ultimately highly useful volume that I hope will inspire further fruitful research into the European postwar.

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Daviborshch's Cart: Narrating the Holocaust in Australian War Crimes Trials.

By David Fraser. Lincoln, NE, and London: University of Nebraska Press. 2010. Pp. xv + 371. Cloth \$55.00. ISBN 978-0-8032-3412-3.

Among the surprising legacies of World War II, none is perhaps more unexpected than the fact that Nazi atrocities continued to be prosecuted, not only decades after the cessation of hostilities, but in countries far removed from the killing fields of eastern Europe. Perhaps no venue for such prosecutions could be